

AMHERST/LA PAZ CENTRO SISTER CITY COMMITTEE

Minutes

Thursday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2011

PRESENT: Paul Baker, Liz Etheridge, Chuck Milch, Kathy Mullin, Mary Santiago, Anne and Ed Stanek, Lydia Vernon Jones, Carol Wood.

REPORT FROM JULIO:

**Becados (Scholarship Students)**

There are still 26 students. They have taken their first exams and are awaiting official reports.

Julio organized a meeting with students and families to discuss the desire of some students to transfer from Pablo Sexto (the private school which all the scholarship students presently attend) to San Nicolas (a public school). He reports that there were pros and cons discussed, but they need to do a more thorough and technical comparison before making any decisions. They will meet again after this has been done to make a final decision.

The students spent some time finishing the painting of the Community Center, washing surfaces, trimming bushes and generally refurbishing.

Tutoring will be offered from 8 – 12 am on Saturdays and will target First, Second and Third year students.

**La Paz Centro Committee**

Julio reports that the committee will meet regularly once a month. He lists the committee members as (on the USAID grant application):

Chair: Julio Carrasco

Vice Chair: Ligia Quiroz

Treasurer: Maycol Valle (Julio's son)

Secretary: Alcira Medrano (Julio's wife)

Other members: Sandra Oporta, Juan Torrez, Ángela Hernández and Alberto Susano

Nieve and Rafaela were not mentioned so we asked Mary to inquire about their interest in being on the committee.

## **USAID GRANT**

Julio sent us a copy of the grant application that he is submitting to USAID to create a computer center out of the Community Center. This would involve installing a ceiling and airconditioning. He has not mentioned electricity or upkeep costs.

## **PORCH PROJECT**

Julio sent us a video of the progress on the porch. The support posts and brick walls have been erected (one full wall on the right and the rest half walls). He says he has enough money for the roof, but because of skyrocketing oil prices, the original cost estimate has increased dramatically and he does not have enough money to put in the grill between the half walls and the ceiling, the tile floor or to pay for the labor.

Anne requested that Mary ask why he felt there needed to be grills installed. We would also like receipts and an accounting of how the funds that he received from the delegation to create this porch (\$1370) were spent.

## **WORLD VISION MICROLOANS**

Julio is organizing a meeting of La Paz Centro citizens who might be interested in applying to World Vision for microloans to start a small business.

## **LIBRARY**

We are interested in supplying the library with a few graphing calculators and appropriate textbooks so that students can have access to these aids during after school hours. Mary will ask Julio about this and whether we should deal directly with the librarian.

## **MUSIC PROGRAM**

Kathy was approached by Juan who has an interest in starting a musical instrument program with youth in La Paz Centro. She has followed up on this and will make some enquiries to find out if the University in Leon has a music department which might be able to organize some kind of outreach program. We might be interested in helping to fund something like this.

Our next meeting will be on **Thursday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:30 pm in the Lower Internal Meeting Room of the Bangs Center.**

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Stanek, Chair